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House of Representatives

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION
OF H.R. 4241, DEFICIT REDUCTION
ACT OF 2005—Continued

□ 2108

Messrs. CARNAHAN, AL GREEN of Texas, WYNN, RUSH, PETERSON of Minnesota, ISRAEL and Ms. MCKINNEY changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Messrs. BEAUPREZ, HEFLEY, WELDON of Florida, SOUDER, POMBO, SHUSTER, MACK, Mrs. KELLY and Mrs. BONO changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the question of consideration was decided in the affirmative.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentlewoman from Rochester, New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. PUTNAM asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, this is an historic evening, an evening when we have come together to truly chart the course for the Federal Government's spending over the next number of years.

House Resolution 560 provides for consideration of H.R. 4241, the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. The Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 is the first time since 1997 that such a measure has come this far. The rule provides 2 hours of debate and a motion to recommit with or without instructions.

As a member of both the Rules and the Budget Committee, I am pleased to bring this historic resolution to the floor for our consideration.

Mr. Speaker, most all Americans rely on the government to provide security for themselves and their families, for their Nation. After defense, though, expectations vary widely about what Americans expect out of their government. But those expectations, whatever they may be, they all are rooted in the common need, the common expectation that whatever government does, that it be done wisely, prudently, efficiently, without waste or abuse of their hard-earned tax dollars.

The congressional budget process is a chance to ensure that our government behaves in a fiscally responsible and responsive manner to provide opportunity and security for today and for future generations.

In my first term in Congress I was appointed to the Budget Committee. I was pleased that this assignment would afford me the opportunity to receive the full scope of all the programs that exist, all the agencies, all the departments that fall under the umbrella of the Federal Government. But I was shocked when I got on that committee to learn how little control Congress actually exerts over spending in many of these agencies and programs.

Discretionary spending, that portion of the budget that consumes all the sound and fury that a Congress can manufacture, makes up less than half of total spending, half of the total budget.

□ 2115

Mandatory spending, entitlement spending, that spending that is on autopilot, accounts for 54 percent of the total budget and, if left unchecked, in a decade will consume nearly two-thirds, or 62 percent, of total Federal spending.

I have been dismayed at how Congress has allowed its voice to become fainter and fainter when it comes to spending taxpayer dollars on entitlement programs. It is time that this

Congress take responsibility for the entire spending picture. We cannot avoid the tough decisions. It is our job to set the priorities of government and then fund them appropriately. It is our job to practice thorough oversight of the programs and agencies that consume our tax dollars. We must find the waste, the fraud, the abuse in the programs and blaze a trail to smarter, more responsive government.

Anyone watching the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina would agree that government was neither smart nor responsive. The time has come for this House to reassert its role and take back control of both discretionary and mandatory spending.

This legislation is another step towards smarter and more confident government. The congressional budget resolution called for a reduction in discretionary spending; and for the first time since 1997, it included deficit reduction instructions to authorizing committees to find and achieve mandatory savings for a more accountable government. It does this by finding smarter ways to spend and by slowing the rate of growth in the Federal Government.

Eight different authorizing committees have worked hard to find these savings within their individual jurisdictions through regular order, through individual members practicing their individual expertise, through their individual interests on their authorizing committees. Regular order was used to develop this plan for a smarter government, and I want to commend those chairmen and all those committee members, not just the Budget Committee members, not just the Appropriations Committee members, but the entire House who participated in this process and, through their aggressive oversight, identified nearly \$50 billion in inefficiencies.

I want to congratulate the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), our budget chairman, and his ranking member and

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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all the members of the Committee on the Budget of the House for their hard work, for preparing the deficit reduction package.

I look forward to passing this reform bill and reaffirming sound oversight and fiscal accountability here in Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SLAUGHTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I once said that budgets are moral documents. They reflect our choices, our priorities and they most clearly define our values, as a government and as a Nation.

Today's 5-year budget reconciliation is no different, and that is exactly why the Republicans in the House are worried. They are worried that the American people will see that they have sold out our American values.

So it should come as no surprise that it has taken a week of intraparty fighting in the Republican Conference and one false start to get the bill to the floor. Why? Because they cannot muster the votes in their own party to get this budget passed.

One of my Republican colleagues captured it best in yesterday's CQ Daily when he said, "If the Republican Party cannot stand for responsible spending, then we stand for nothing at all."

I agree with him on that point; and as this Republican leadership continues to flail and flounder, there can be only one conclusion drawn from this budget reconciliation, that this majority has come to stand for nothing at all, except for making the rich richer while the rest of America pays the bill.

Because at its core, that is what this budget does, and it is what the budget was intentionally designed to do, cut vital programs and increase the national debt in order to create tax cuts for the rich and the superrich.

I and many of my colleagues in this body, both Republican and Democrat, see nothing at all responsible about this agenda, and neither will the majority of the American people.

This budget reconciliation is not worthy of the ideals of this Nation. If it gets out of the House tonight, this Congress should be ashamed.

Republicans call this the Deficit Reduction Act, when very shortly they will actually increase our already-obsessive deficit by another \$5 billion by passing the tax cut bill. Republicans will claim on the floor tonight that they are reducing the deficit, but it is a deception.

Do not be fooled by their Enron-style accounting. The majority deliberately chose to separate this bill from its planned package of \$56 billion in tax cuts for the rich, more than half of which goes to the superrich, those with incomes over \$1 million a year.

Without missing a beat, they are trying to finance the tax cut, as well as the skyrocketing debt, on the backs of the poor, the disabled, the elderly, and the middle class. As a result, working Americans will pay more and get less.

For instance, the budget will cut student aid programs by \$14.3 billion, which will make college more expensive, or totally unaffordable, for you and your children and will ensure that literally millions of students will not have the means to achieve a higher education.

Until earlier this evening, they were even planning to cut the school lunch programs for poor children and food stamps for needy families. I would ask, whose values are these? They certainly are not mine, and they are not the values of the hard-working families that I represent, which leads me to a very important point that I need to make here today.

Three months ago, a stunned Nation watched as the national horror that was Hurricane Katrina unfolded on our television screens. No one could believe that this kind of widespread suffering could happen here in America. It was a sobering moment for this Nation. It was the moment that we understood that America had forgotten our moral responsibility to provide for the security and welfare of all our fellow Americans.

I would ask my friends in the majority, in the wake of that realization, how can we cut the very programs that the victims of Hurricane Katrina will depend on to rebuild their lives? So that the richest among us can be even richer?

Unfortunately, this majority sees fit to pull what little these victims have left right out from under their feet.

The result of this budget will be the denial of affordable medical service to those who have nowhere else to turn and the creation of unprecedented health care premiums for those who can least afford them.

Child support services are cut as well, making it harder for working parents to raise their children.

I would ask my fellow citizens, have we learned nothing? Is this the America that you believe in?

Last year alone, the salary of the major corporate CEOs increased by just an average of 30 percent. This year, the oil companies are making the highest profits in history. In fact, over the last 4 months alone, Exxon Mobil has earned just shy of \$10 billion in profits, and middle-class Americans at this time can no longer afford to fill their cars with gas.

As the winter approaches, middle-class families in the Northeast are having to choose between paying their skyrocketing heating bills and buying food for their families, and it is only November. All the while, the majority is making it harder for your children to go to college and more expensive to get decent health care for your family. I cannot think of anything less Amer-

ican than this. I cannot think of anything more out of touch with the values of our families.

After all, no responsible parent in America would fail to provide their children food and clothes or an education just so they could afford to buy a boat or take a trip, but that is the moral equivalent of what this majority seeks to do here today; and it is a subversion of every value we hold dear, because as Americans we meet our responsibilities. We take care of our families. We pay our bills, and we should demand the same thing from this Republican government.

That is why I am asking my colleagues to oppose this rule and strongly oppose this bill, because the budget sells out America. I would ask, if we accept this, what will be next? If we say that it is acceptable to slash education, health care, trade protection, senior medical coverage, affordable housing, student loans, foster care and family planning, if we agree to abandon all fiscal responsibility and further increase the already record national debt, just so that we can orchestrate one of the biggest giveaways to the rich, then what will be next?

I know if we band together America can do better than this. We can do better than turning the American Dream into a privilege for the few, instead of a right for all. We must do better, and we need to start today by rejecting this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS).

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida, not only for his leadership but also working so diligently with the Budget Committee, including the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), our great chairman.

Mr. Speaker, tonight is an opportunity for the Republican majority to meet the demands of this great Nation when we talk about the ability to have a plan that will help control spending, where we can move forward to make sure that we better the circumstance that this country is in.

Earlier this year, this Congress began engaging Governors from all across this great Nation about ways in which we could make Medicaid spending and Medicaid programs work more efficiently across this government. I participated with the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) in meetings with Mark Warner, who is a Democrat Governor from Virginia, and Tom Vilsack, who is a Governor from Iowa. We talked about ways that this Congress could go about giving the Governors more flexibility and the ability to manage those processes and programs that they have in place.

The Budget Committee, as a result of work that has been done by other committees, one-eighth of the bills which we bring tonight simply talk about

ways that we can make sure that the spending that is done tonight is done more efficiently and more effectively, but done in a way that will create better services to the American public. What we find now, as we come to the floor to do the things that literally Governors all across this country have asked for, the flexibility to run their programs without just giving them waivers, but to let them run their own programs, we are told we are cutting services to poor people and how mean we are.

The truth could not be further from that which is said, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is that we are going to put more money than ever in Medicaid that will allow States the opportunity to take care of their problems.

I am proud of this bill tonight. I support it, and I hope that the American people see it for what it is, a great opportunity to save money.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, this budget reconciliation is a Republican raid on student aid: over \$14 billion in cuts to Federal student aid programs, cuts that add \$5,800 to the costs of the average student's education, \$5,800. That is a lot of money for any family, especially the poor and the working poor.

Actually, cutting student aid is a very clever new military recruiting tool because by discouraging students from attending college for financial reasons, their only choice is often to join the military.

Nearly 50 percent of military recruits come from lower-middle-class to poor households. Mr. Speaker, in the year 2004, nearly two-thirds of Army recruits came from areas where the median household income is below the U.S. average, where joining the military is the only way to learn a trade or pay for school.

The raid on student aid becomes a military draft through the lack of opportunity.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Before we get too deep into this debate, let us go ahead and straighten out three myths.

Myth number one is the myth of the cuts, because only in Washington and only in the other side's rhetoric is a reduction in the rate of increase considered a cut. When growth rates are going from 7.5 percent to 7.3 percent or from 6.3 to 6 percent and programs are getting more dollars the next year than they got the year before, that is not a cut.

Myth number two, that it is mean. What could be mean about demanding that services to people who need them the most are administered effectively, wisely, and efficiently? Is it waste in programs that administer to our most needy and our most vulnerable, the worst kind of waste?

□ 2130

Do we not have a special obligation to root out those dollars that have been directed to the people who need them the most but are not finding their way there because of inefficiencies in our government?

And, thirdly, that this is somehow part of an overall scheme that is tied in with preventing tax increases. There are two separate packages moving. You have an opportunity, you have an opportunity to vote against keeping the tax rates where they are and allowing them to rise. You have an opportunity to do that. But you have a separate opportunity, through regular order, through the ordinary process, through all the individual committees, to also take a stand to correct and rein in mandatory spending that is out of control and is gobbling up the Federal budget. You have that opportunity.

Two separate votes. You can be for savings and still vote to let taxes go up on another day, but do not try to have it both ways.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) to elaborate on these points.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, Federal spending is just too high and basically it is in danger of spiraling out of complete control. But American families are really better off if they are able to keep more of their money to decide to spend it as they see their needs fit. But only when excesses and unnecessary spending are identified and eliminated will that happen. And that is really the responsibility of both sides of the aisle.

The bill before us began with \$34 billion in savings. We have another \$15 billion roughly in savings on top of it. This will not fix our mandatory spending problems right away, but it is a first step in the right direction.

Unfortunately, opponents on the other side of the aisle have been spreading lies about it when they say there are cuts in the Medicaid funding program. In fact, the reform program includes a 7 percent increase in spending for Medicaid. Programs like Medicaid simply cannot sustain themselves without any reform. No one can argue that Medicaid is a completely 100 percent efficient program. Reforms are necessary to protect the program and protect the services that are provided to the people who receive them. Right now, around 53 million Americans receive the benefits of this program. It is a State-Federal partnership. And unless reform is done now, we will see that program become disabled and cripple the States and eventually lead to bankruptcy.

One area we see this is in prescription drugs. Time and time again, the Federal Government overpays for prescription drug benefits. And unless reform is made in this program, we will see that program crash as well.

The other side has lied with regard to student loans as well. There are no cuts in the student loan program under

this budget reform plan. That is another lie of the other side of the aisle. As the number of college students increases, the student loan program will grow as well. Under this bill, student financial aid will continue to increase as the number of kids in colleges increase. Financial aid actually goes up through increases in loan limits and reductions in origination fees.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD).

(Mr. BOYD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, my young friend from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM) knows very well that his constituents and most Americans understand that when you reconcile a budget that you have two sides of that budget, the spending side and the tax side. I would agree with many things that he says, that spending has run out of control. It certainly has run out of control in the last 5 years since this administration has been in and the Republicans have controlled the Congress and the White House.

Americans also understand that we need to balance our books. They do it in their homes. They do it in their businesses. They do it in their local governments. That is the problem that most of us have with this process that is going on here.

Today we are looking at a spending cut bill that is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$50 billion, give or take a few hundred million. Tomorrow we are going to look at a revenue reduction bill that is somewhere in the range of \$60 to \$70 billion, depending upon what the Rules Committee reports out. In any event, what we will have will be an increase in the deficit, money that will have to be borrowed by the American people to cover those differences.

The American people also understand that this United States Government has an \$8 trillion Federal debt, that we have about a \$500 billion annual deficit, the highest in the Nation's history. We have the largest trade deficits in the history of the Nation. We have got a very expensive and controversial war in Iraq. We have got the highest gas prices in the history of this Nation. We have got interest rates that are going up on a monthly basis.

Mr. Speaker, the economic model has suffered, and it is time to put it right with a bipartisan summit called by the President of the United States.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would just point out that the gentleman has two votes coming up, one where he can do something about the spending and one where he can make clear the position on either raising taxes or not raising taxes. There are two separate and distinct votes. He cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING).

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I believe that I will agree with our Democrat colleagues on very little this evening, but one thing I do agree on, Mr. Speaker, is that this is a debate about values. We value the family budget. They value the Federal budget. We value accountability. We value efficiency and rooting out waste and fraud and abuse. They value more government, more bureaucracy, more dependency. And that is the difference, Mr. Speaker.

We all know that there is a fiscal hurricane coming towards America. The General Accountability Office said if we do not start this process of reforms and start it today that within one generation, we will have to double taxes on the American people. Mr. Speaker, that is simply unconscionable.

Our friends on the other side will say we simply cannot cut government spending. Well, I wish, in fact, that we were cutting government spending, but instead, the Federal budget is going to be greater next year than last year. Mandatory spending is going to be greater next year than last year. Food stamps will be up. Medicare will be up. Medicaid will be up. That is falsehood.

They tell us there is no waste, fraud, abuse, duplication in the Federal budget. Yet this is a Federal budget that in the past has paid five times as much for a wheelchair in one bureaucracy than another because one would competitively bid and the other would not. This is a bureaucracy that has paid VA benefits to dead people. And the list goes on.

We will hear from the other side that tax relief is somehow the problem for all of our fiscal woes. Yet we have cut taxes and tax receipts are up and 4 million jobs have been created.

And, finally, we will hear about compassion, Mr. Speaker. But where is the compassion in doubling taxes on our children in one generation, taking away jobs, taking away hope, taking away opportunity from those who are most vulnerable, those who do not vote, and those who are not yet born? There is no compassion in that, Mr. Speaker.

We must pass this reform package.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA).

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, before I begin my presentation, I want to just say I cannot believe the comments from the gentleman who just spoke.

Today, the national debt stands at over \$8 trillion. That is more than \$27,000 for every man, woman, and child in America. This fiscal mess is a direct result of the policies put in place by the leadership of this Congress and the Bush White House.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle want the members of the Blue Dog Coalition to join with them in their latest efforts to run the deficit

even higher. Mr. Speaker, that will never happen. It is time for real reform, not more of the same. The Blue Dog Coalition has put forward a comprehensive 12-step program that would dig America out of its fiscal mess.

Remarkably, our Republican colleagues have criticized the Blue Dogs for not supporting their sham reconciliation program, even though several of their original programs are put in the Blue Dog 12-step program. After refusing to reach across party lines to negotiate a real deficit package, the Republicans now accuse the Blue Dogs of partisanship.

Are you all serious? My friends, you have abandoned fiscal responsibility and your way is not working. America has had enough. I have had enough. Each Member of Congress has a certain piece of these cuts that they hate the most, whether it be child support or Medicaid or food stamps. But ladies and gentlemen, for me it is personal. This bill includes several provisions that will reduce foster care assistance and services. This bill cuts foster care-related funding by \$600 million a year. Our Federal budget is nearly \$1 trillion a year.

Ladies and gentlemen on that side of the aisle, are you serious in telling me that you cannot find any budget cuts that do not affect abandoned children? Are you telling me that you cannot find anyplace to pay for your tax cuts that does not affect abandoned and abused and neglected children?

Ladies and gentlemen, I have two children that I adopted out of foster care. When I told them about these cuts, they told me, "Daddy, don't let them do it." Ladies and gentlemen, they told me, "Daddy, don't let them do it."

This is not the right place to cut, ladies and gentlemen. You have not consulted with us. This is not the right package. You need to change the way and the direction that you are going.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Blue Dogs are stuck in the dog box of their leadership. They need to get off of the porch and bring a plan to the table. The chairman of the Budget Committee testified before the Rules Committee, asking that a substitute be made in order. The 12-step plan was still stuck someplace else. The Blue Dogs were still on the porch. The Blue Dogs were still locked in the box. They did not come forward with an opportunity to present their own plan.

They are free to criticize ours. We are big boys and girls. We are going to stand by this plan, and we are going to move it forward because it is important that we back up what their rhetoric is, which is that mandatory and entitlement spending is eating up this budget and somebody has got to do something about it besides just bark.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY).

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman for yielding me this time tonight.

I have spent 30-plus years as a CPA, professional background. I know a little bit about budgets, and we work them from two sides. One is the revenue side; the other is the spending side. Tonight we are talking about spending. To put the spending in perspective, it is a 5-year plan that reduces that spending by some \$50 billion, which is a lot of money under any circumstance. But spending over that 5-year period in mandatory spending will be \$8.5 trillion. If we do the math, that is not quite a rounding error. It is just a little bit more than a rounding error in the overall spending. So what we are hearing in the rhetoric on the other side is that America is on a razor-thin edge of disaster, a ½ percent razor-thin edge in mandatory spending.

Yesterday's USA Today showed what spending will be like in 2050, a time when my children and grandchildren will be trying to bear this burden that we are currently after. Albert Einstein said the most powerful thing in the universe is compound interest, and that is great if you have got a savings account that you are adding to periodically and you are rolling that interest in there. But compound interest on the spending side is a disaster of biblical proportions. We will see in 2050 what compound spending growth will do.

What we are doing tonight with this original first step, modest first step, is to try to rein in the growth of Federal spending. It is not cuts, as my good colleague from Florida has said. It is simply a reduction in the growth of spending. Everybody can spend it any way that they want to.

I would ask that we keep our comments tonight in a manner that behooves this body that we stick with the facts and that we be responsible for things we say here tonight. It is important. This is an important debate.

Families cannot operate at a deficit. Small businesses certainly cannot. My clients certainly could not. About the only entity that can is the Federal Government. And because the Federal Government can operate at a deficit does not mean that it should operate at a deficit.

So I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this rule and this bill.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY).

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New York for her leadership.

I am absolutely amazed at you boys over there. I wonder what you are going to be when you grow up. For you to come to this floor and attack the Blue Dogs on fiscal responsibility demonstrates an unparalleled display of ignorance, stupidity, or just down-hard foolishness. I do not know which.

□ 2145

You stand there and say we are increasing spending, but we are cutting spending. I do not know whether you cannot add or subtract. I do not know

what your problem is. But I can tell you this, and you can be cute, you can be smart, and you may even pull this off, son, but I tell you one thing, you are young enough, you are going to have to live with it. You are putting a tax on the next generation that they cannot pay and they cannot repeal it, and you are going to have to live with it.

Do not ask for my time because I will not yield.

I can tell you this: you are going to suffer the consequences just like everybody else in the next generation and those to come thereafter. And I cannot believe that you have the audacity to come to this floor with this assault on women and children and try to portray it, as this other Howdy Doody-looking nimrod said, that he wanted to talk about family values and values. That is unprecedented in this House.

I have the time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield for a parliamentary inquiry?

Mr. BERRY. I yield to the gentleman from California.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire of the Chair, is it appropriate for Members of this House to address the Chair or address their remarks to other Members?

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I do believe that the Blue Dogs were referred to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The Chair advises all Members that they should address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, as I do proceed, let me continue to tell you, if you cannot take it, go home. Do not do this to our children and grandchildren. You cannot take it, you are not man enough to pass these rules and pass these laws and build this dam on our children and grandchildren until they cannot carry it any longer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members that remarks should be addressed to the Chair.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, my apologies for besmirching the reputation of the Blue Dogs. It is clear that their bark is still in place, though their bite is lacking.

Mr. Speaker, that was quite a performance, and I respect the gentleman's passion; but I do not respect the fact that he chose to personalize the debate, an important debate about the future of our Nation. I do not like the way that he characterized me; I do not like the way that he characterized the gentleman from Texas. It seems to me that the sensitivities about the reputation of the Blue Dogs is where the thin skin really lies.

Mr. Speaker, this budget is about the future and this organization has created the impression over a number of years of fiscal responsibility; and yet

time after time after time when given the opportunity to truly do something about it, they just fade away. They just go back to the porch. Instead of taking the tough votes, instead of bringing real reform and making government work better so future generations of men and women and businesses and children and all aspects, instead of guaranteeing a bright future for all Americans, they just choose to talk about it.

The gentleman is right when he said that our younger generation is going to be most impacted by these fiscal decisions. They are. That is why we are here today to try to do something about it. They are here today to just talk about it. Where is their plan to rein in the overarching growth of Federal spending? What are they going to do about the fact that entitlement spending takes up over half of the budget and will soon take up two-thirds? Where was their plan about what they were going to do for these same women and children, as if the country was only made up of women and children, that benefit from these programs, what about all Americans? What were you going to do about this generation and future generations' retirement security? The same thing you were going to do about this, just talk about it, but not actually take the tough votes to do anything about securing their future.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA).

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, I think there is one thing we can all agree on tonight, and that is the deficit is too big. But the question is what are we going to do about it. There are only two ways we have a deficit, Mr. Speaker. Either we spend too much, or we tax too little.

I know that the people of the Second District of Indiana do not feel like they are taxed too little, and I do not think that they are a whole lot different from the rest of Americans. The fact is we spend enough money around here. What we do not do is prioritize.

We have heard and will continue to hear a whole lot of rhetoric that we are slashing spending.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is we are not cutting spending at all. Today we are simply slowing the future growth of government. The truth is that Medicare spending will grow next year. Food stamp spending will grow next year. Student financial aid will grow next year. Now, I understand that only in Washington smaller increases are considered cuts; but even by Washington standards, our efforts today are modest.

When you cut through all of the rhetoric, what we are doing tonight is slowing the growth of government over the next 5 years from 6.4 percent to 6.3 percent. That is one-tenth of one percent. That is equivalent to a family making \$50,000 a year finding savings of \$50 a year. Anyone who says we cannot find

savings of one-tenth of 1 percent has no serious interest in making government more efficient, has no ideas other than to raise taxes on the economy and American families, and they only want to use how much we spend rather than how well we spend as a measurement of success.

Mr. Speaker, the American people understand that spending money is easy and managing money is hard. Anyone serious about reducing the deficit by returning to fiscal sanity and starting to make government more self-sufficient will support this rule and support this bill. I encourage all of my colleagues to do so.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I cannot begin to tell my Republican friends how disappointed I am, and I want to speak to why you are seeing so much passion on this floor tonight from Democrats, and especially from Blue Dog Democrats, of which I am a proud member. I am going into my fourth year here, and every year it has been the Blue Dog Democrats, not the Republicans, who have been at the forefront of trying to rein in deficit spending. It has been Blue Dogs who have been at the forefront to put forward pay-as-you-go.

You say we do not have a plan. We have a 12-point plan. We have tried to institute pay-as-you-go principles from day one. We have begged, we have pleaded with the President of the United States to meet with us to make sure that we rein in the deficit. So when you see Blue Dogs coming down here mad as hell, you have to understand that the reason we are mad is because we are not going to stand idly by and see the hypocrisy of a party that squandered billions and billions of dollars in surplus in the last 4 years and then come down here and say you are leading the fight to cut deficits, when you have done more than any President, any party in modern times to add to the deficit. And then the worst thing you want to do is to squeeze in a tax cut of \$70 billion and then to do it on the backs of those that can least afford it.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, back in Indiana when a tree falls on your house, first you tend to the wounded; then you start to clean up; then you sit down and figure out how you are going to pay for it.

Well, tonight, thanks to the leadership of Speaker HASTERT, in the aftermath of having spent over \$60 billion in 6 days to meet the real needs of the families and communities affected by Hurricane Katrina, tonight Congress is going to figure out how to pay for it.

In the Deficit Reduction Act, Congress will achieve more than \$50 billion

in savings over the next 5 years to offset the extraordinary cost of Hurricane Katrina. While this is an important first step in restoring fiscal discipline, there is still work to be done. As has been said by my colleagues in the Democratic Party tonight, with an \$8 trillion national debt, with more spending on hurricane relief just around the corner, it is imperative that we not only pass the Deficit Reduction Act but that we move immediately on to the other serious work, to look for an across-the-board cut in this year's budget, ensuring that the cost of Hurricane Katrina will be borne by the entirety of our Federal priorities.

We must do more, but we dare not do less. Tonight we will do that which is of first importance: we will begin the process of putting our fiscal house in order. President John F. Kennedy said it best when he said: "To lead is to choose." And this is such a moment.

Tonight, whatever the outcome of this vote, this is a moment of truth, where we will set aside the rhetoric on this blue and gold carpet, and the American people will see for themselves who in this Congress is willing to make the tough choices in tough times to put our fiscal house in order. Bring the vote, and I urge my colleagues of goodwill on both sides of the aisle to adopt the Deficit Reduction Act.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BEAN).

Ms. BEAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the rule. One of the reasons I came to Congress was to bring a real-world business perspective to government. In the business world, accountability is survival. In this Congress, it is a catch phrase usually directed elsewhere.

Demands for personal responsibility or corporate accountability abound, but rarely congressional accountability or fiscal restraint. Instead of sticking to the motto, If it is worth doing, it is worth paying for, this administration and this Congress have turned the largest budget surplus in history into the largest deficit in history with a reckless borrow-and-spend profligacy. It should be no surprise then that today's so-called Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 actually increases the budget deficit, fails to fix the broken budget process, and does nothing to reduce America's dependence on foreign capital.

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I will oppose this irresponsible budget package which does not include pay go spending controls. We must pay as we go. It is a simple concept with a proven track record. The budget enforcement rules of the 1990s were an important part of getting the budget back into balance. The pay-as-you-go rules were tested and they worked. Accountability in government should be more than a catch phrase. It is time for us to say the buck stops here.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to show you a picture of a place I think all of us know. It is Disneyland, the Magic Kingdom, the Magic Castle where fantasy is real. And we go down and we all pretend to be boys and girls for the day.

Well, here is another place where fantasy becomes reality. It is our office building, the United States Capitol. Only here can you call a 7 percent increase a cut. And what are the lap dogs, I mean, the blue dogs barking about? What I am saying is, when you increase the budget 7 percent—

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I make a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman will state his point of order.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, does the speaker not have to address you and not a group or an individual?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members they should address their remarks to the Chair. The gentleman may proceed.

Mr. KINGSTON. My point is that we can all live in the fantasyland of Disneyworld or the United States Capitol, and when a bill that is increasing Medicaid goes up \$66 billion and people can call it a cut because they did not get their way, that it did not go up 7.3 percent, it only goes up 7 percent. You can find any excuse to vote no, and I guess in the fantasyland of Washington, D.C., you can call that a cut. But the reality is, all these posters and easels that are out in the halls of the Rayburn, the Longworth and the Cannon building are just fantasy. Here is a chance to actually reduce spending and you are barking at it and saying no.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) to address the fantasyland of this Mickey Mouse budget.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening we are here to consider a bill known as the Deficit Reduction Act. And only here in a Republican-led Congress could something be called a deficit reduction act that adds \$20 billion in new debt to this Nation's budget. Not only does it add \$20 billion in new debt, but it also has nothing to do with paying for disaster relief. It is about cutting programs that matter to our children, our working families and our seniors to the tune of \$50 billion. It is about approving \$70 billion in new tax cuts. I was not real good in math back in high school, but I think anybody can figure that one out. \$50 billion in cuts, \$70 billion in new tax cuts equals \$20 billion in new debt. And what is being cut? Student aid, \$14.3 billion. As the father of a 17-year-old that is approaching college, like so many parents across this country, I am concerned about being able to pay for my child's college education. Parents all over this country tonight are concerned that the Repub-

lican leadership are proposing \$14 billion in cuts for their children's college education. Medicaid, the health insurance program for the poor, the disabled, the elderly being cut by \$11.4 billion.

Mr. Speaker, let me tell you about my America. In Arkansas, half the children are on Medicaid. In Arkansas, 8 out of every 10 seniors in nursing homes are on Medicaid. In Arkansas, one out of every five people are on Medicaid, and this Republican-led Congress, tonight, plans to cut Medicaid \$11.4 billion. And if that is not enough, they are going to cut agriculture programs \$3 billion. My farm families back home in East Arkansas cannot afford these kind of cuts as they simply try to do what they do best, and that is provide a safe and reliable source of food and fiber for America's families.

You know, as this debate unfolded tonight, as I was sitting here, I could not help but think about Matthew, chapter 25, verse 40. "I tell you the truth. Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." That is what I learned growing up in a little country church just outside of Hope, Arkansas, Midway United Methodist Church.

Eight trillion dollars is the Nation's debt under this Republican-led Congress, the largest deficit ever in our Nation's history for a fifth year in a row. In fact, this Republican President and this Republican Congress has borrowed more money from foreign investors and foreign banks in less than 5 years than the previous 42 presidents combined. It is hard now to believe that we had a balanced budget from 1998 to 2001. Contrast that to today, when we are borrowing \$907 million a day, sending \$188 million a day to Iraq, \$33 million a day to Afghanistan. This plan does not reflect America's values. This plan does not reflect my values. Vote no on this and vote yes to the Blue Dog 12-point plan which none of these Members are cosponsoring.

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, I have not memorized all of Matthew, but I am pretty sure he did not like calling kids Nimrods. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ).

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, actually I am going to come to the well of this House tonight to celebrate, not besmirch the gentleman's youth nor certainly his wisdom. The gentleman from Florida and the gentleman from Texas, it is you, of anybody in this Chamber tonight, it is you and the millions of your generation that you represent in this Chamber, in this people's House that we ought to be concerned about. You are the ones that should be passionate because you are going to get stuck with the bill.

I thank both the gentlemen. And there has been a lot of heated rhetoric in here tonight. Let us talk at least a shred of truth. What this bill does is suggest that for a person to be Medicaid eligible has to have less than 3